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CATALOGUE
OF
PAINTINGS,
DRYPOINTS AND ETCHINGS
PRINTED IN COLOR.

BY
JEAN FRANÇOIS RAFFAËLLI.

ST. BOTOLPH CLUB,
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A4p
1899

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ALFRED MUDGE & SON, PRINTERS,
BOSTON.



IT was in the year 1894, five years ago, that I first came to America. At that time I was invited to come over to the opening of an exhibition of my works given by the American Art Association. I came, intending to pass one week in New York, and take the next steamer back; but I remained five months, travelling from one section of this great country to another, and becoming wonderfully interested in American life of which I had not before the faintest suspicion. During all those five months I never touched a brush nor a pencil, because I feel that no artist should paint what he does not thoroughly understand.

Since that time I have been often asked to return, but the moment never seemed propitious until a few months ago, when I received a letter from Pittsburg inquiring if I would consent to be one of the jury to award the prizes at the approaching exhibition in the Carnegie Gallery of that city. Feeling the honor of being chosen by my confrères of two worlds as one of two members to come from Europe to join with their American confrères for that occasion, I was proud to accept, and thus became a member of the jury of the International Exposition at Pittsburg.

When once more I reached the shores of America, I gazed about me with the same intense interest with which I had been inspired on my first visit. Arriving in New York, I had the opportunity to behold your beautiful arch of triumph, and to perceive the great advance made in decorative effects throughout your big city—a city alive and strong with a breath of a superb prosperity. Next I found myself in Pittsburg, where I was lost in the clouds of smoke, another token of the same prosperity. To a charming woman of that town who was complaining of the difficulties of properly keeping house in such an atmosphere, I replied: "Pity is superfluous, Madame; the more smoke the more business." Knowing of my intended journey to Pittsburg, M. Durand-Ruel asked me to exhibit my latest works in New York, and it is this exhibition of which the door is opened to-day.

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You will find what, perhaps, to you will be an indefinable change between my present work and that of a few years since. I desire to explain this change to you as I have explained it to myself. My life has not been an easy one, for I was brought up in luxury until I was fifteen, when within a few years my family lost its entire fortune, and I became acquainted with the most grinding poverty. Then came the war of 1870, to throw its veil of mourning over all the young men who were just at the outset of their careers. At that period I painted with the greatest sincerity my hopelessness, my bitterness, my anger, my madness. It follows then that my art was a violent art, sombre, bitter, hopeless. I was at that time consumed with the greatest pity and commiseration for those who had been defeated in the great battle of life. I passed several years in such a state of mind as could only inspire an art sad and vibrating with a generous pity.

But as the years rolled by they brought great changes into my life. First, my poverty was changed, if not into immense riches at least into a comfortable independence. My old age and that of those dear to me was now assured after the modest fashion which most pleased and suited me; for as one nears his fiftieth birthday a tranquillity comes to the spirit at the same time that one realizes the vanity of many things. Then, too,—must I make the confession?—my artistic successes have been such that all my bitterness has fled. Many of my pictures are in the best galleries in the world. Three are in the Luxembourg at Paris; two in the museum of Brussels; two are owned by the city of Paris; others are in the museums of Philadelphia, Rome, Stockholm, Nantes, Lyons, Beziers, Liège, Nancy, Mulhausen, Bordeaux, and Christiania. A piece of my sculpture is in the Dresden museum, some of my drypoints and etchings in color are in the museums of Berlin, Venice, Dresden, Hamburg, and in the Cabinet des Estampes at Paris.

The strange effects of my first trip to America, with its vivid impressions, must also be taken into account. I here discovered an unending hope for all men who have confidence in their own power. Why not also acknowledge that the success of my own

efforts has brought me to believe in happiness? In this connection I recall some words of your great painter, William E. Dan-nat, who had come to purchase a picture executed in my earlier style. The subject was a very much bent-over old laborer. "Yes," said he, "that little old man is worth a big price, for he who created him is dead; for you, my dear Raffaëlli, will never do that any more." And my friend was right. Since by sad sights my melancholy was not soothed, I was forced to supply by my art my great desire for charm, for beauty, grace, elegance, poetry, tenderness, and the sweetness which could not flourish during my years of hardship. So that at this period I paint the portraits of young girls, the portraits of children, flowers, the sunlight, all things pleasing.

My early admirers probably say still that they like better the Raffaëlli of the first period, while others admire more my new dreams. Had Corot been asked at the end of his life, when he was painting all things as in a beautiful dream, to paint one of the hard, black landscapes of his earlier years, he could not have done so. To-day each thing of his is loved — the first paintings of Brittany, those of Italy, his pictures of nymphs, his landscapes of Ville d'Avray, his studio figures, even to those last landscapes which are nothing more than vague silhouettes of cherished forms.

So after all the storms of youth I have gradually arrived at some degree of serenity, with which it is so well to finish; it is the expression most suitable to the whitening beard. Thus, if life be a succession of accidents, it must be that the oftener they are overcome the less they move us. Why not confess that one finally is tempted to laugh at it all? Again, I say, it is well, it is good to quit life in an amiable and generous fashion. It is the attitude of a man who has suffered, thought, loved, worked, in a word, lived, and who is none the vainer for it.

J. F. RAFFAËLLI.

NEW YORK, Nov. 9, 1899.

ETCHINGS AND DRYPOINTS

PRINTED IN COLORS.

IN the creations which the panorama of social life inspires in an artist, drawing always occupies an essential rôle. It is by lines that the results of his unending research in the wide field of humanity are recorded with matchless precision, that types and temperaments are indicated, and that the apparent is distinguished from the real. These individual characterizations are seen under the dash of a brush, but are better rendered by the first rough sketch, and better still by that personal method of engraving which has ever been the favored medium of painters of life and manners, and which is regarded by them as eminently adapted to reveal the secret and the first movement of their thought. It is in this way that originated the tradition, which Jean François Raffaëlli continues among us to-day with such admirable results. As early as 1880 it was his delight to engrave on copper; his æsthetic bias made him the illustrator demanded by the evolution of modern letters, and nothing can be more suitable to the text than the etched commentaries with which he has enriched the "Croquis Parisiens" of J. K. Huysmans, and the "Germinie Lacerteux" of the Goncourts. It is his etching-needle which has done homage and honor to the publication, projected by the impressionist group, "Le Jour et la Nuit," and to the truly unique collection of Marty. . . . These works, executed without any sequence, although of great significance, require to be recalled; and now, with the lapse of time, they appear to stand forth as the forerunners of his later work. It is, indeed, only since 1890 that Jean François Raffaëlli has devoted himself to that very special and essentially French style of engraving created by Debucourt, which he has thus renovated — again achieving a triumphant success.

The success of his initiative is no matter for wonder. It dates from the time when the mastery of Raffaëlli, in its full maturity, was enriched with the most enviable gifts. A mind such as his does not pursue one single and invariable object ; it is incessantly in hopeful search of the unknown, and in the mode of conception and execution the evolution as well as the progress is constant. In spite of the praise received from all parts of the old and new world, Raffaëlli has taken care not to confine himself to the class of subjects on which his fame was founded, not that he intends to conclude at once his very personal investigation of the outskirts of Paris and its humble folk ; but the thorough independence of his nature was bound to chafe at any limitation, or at any restriction from freely exploring all regions. The manifold researches of his untrammeled intellect developed a corresponding and increasing keenness of perception, and while, at the same time, analysis extended the field of his research, one began to notice a refinement of method, a brightening of his palette, and an ever-subtle record of the effects of light. This gloomy chronicler of sadness in the Parisian suburbs, and of the squalid life of toil, was also capable of rendering the fairy-like aspects of the great city, and of sketching, as a discreet psychologist, the centres of elegance and refinement. Henceforth all the phases of modern life came within the scope of his art. . . .

The salons of the Champ-de-Mars, the exhibitions held at Goupil's in Paris in 1890, and at Raffaëlli's own residence in 1894, bore evidence of the blossoming forth of a talent which, by its opposing contrasts, compelled the critic to reiterate its praise. The remembrance of these great displays of power has not yet faded. As formerly did the author of the "Tableau de Paris," an artist had had the high ambition to leave a picture, an integral and faithful "physiognomy" of his time ; and every one was pleased to find, in the service of an inquiring spirit, the qualities of a keen analyst, and an extraordinary power of expression. A writer and lecturer, as his inclination prompted, Raffaëlli proved himself by turns painter, pastellist,

sculptor, illustrator, and decorator. In view of such evidence of activity, who could have imagined that a portion of his labors, and by no means the least, lay still hidden?

This was precisely the time when Raffaëlli was engrossed body and soul in an arduous task, a task which he resumed daily, in secret, away from the gaze of the crowd. He used to withdraw furtively to a mysterious rendezvous in the neighborhood, and he remained shut up there for many long hours at a time. The engraver's art possessed him completely, to the extent of producing in him that intoxication which, as the Goncourts said, leads to forgetfulness of the world and life. It was not, however, etching pure and simple, but printing in colors with several copper plates, the slow, complicated technique of which cruelly prolongs the anxious expectancy of the final result. Without doubt he avoided the work of his predecessors; the case of Debucourt, just now mentioned, intervenes only to establish a connection and to indicate the common desire to obtain a polychrome image by engraving in intaglio, which Raffaëlli alone deems worthy of the amateur. Although the principle remains the same, note to what extent the applications and the effects appear different. Unlike his predecessor, Raffaëlli always, or almost always, enjoys the drypoint, and his work, far from being concealed, proceeds by straightforward methods, by free and seriously acknowledged indications, and in spite of variety of means, ingenuity of resource, and the sometimes astonishing number of his "registers," he aims less at giving evidence of masterly skill than at giving, by harmonious aspect and delicate freshness of coloring, the impression of an original unique work born of inspiration. These prints are really repeated copies of drawings heightened with water-color, and of wash-drawings. Printed to a limited number of proofs, by the author himself, or under his supervision, with minute care and attention, they present to amateurs of refined taste the charm of some precious, rare, and exquisite production. Raffaëlli has put in them, perhaps without knowing it, the best portion of himself; and we do not remember

having come across more stirring descriptions of the types and manners of the *bourgeoisie* and the people of the street and the faubourg, of the country and the flora, or more comprehensive and intimate notes of feminine gesture caught instantaneously and unawares.

If this collection of prints should have only the merit of offering to meditation, and to daily amusement and study, a *résumé*, a foreshortened view of the beloved work, the result would already be held to be of considerable importance; but, beyond the synthetic interest with which it is invested, it must be regarded as singularly instructive as to what is underlying the work — talent; the future will have to appraise for him, at its exact value, the knowledge and the refined touch of a master, and the universality of his philosophy.

ROGER-MARX.

PARIS, May, 1898.

PAINTINGS.

1. YOUNG GIRL WITH CORNFLOWERS.
2. THE OLD PEASANT.
3. AMERICAN FARMER CLEARING A FOREST.
4. FLOWERS.
5. THE RUE DU HELDER, AT PARIS.
6. THE RAG-PICKER.
7. FLOWERS.
8. THE LITTLE PARISIAN.
9. GIRL WITH BUTTERCUPS.
10. LE PARVIS, NOTRE-DAME OF PARIS.
11. ST. ETIENNE DU MONT, PARIS.
12. THE BOOTBLACK OF THE TRAVELLER'S
HOTEL.
13. FLOWERS.

14. HEAD OF A GIRL.
15. AN EMPTY LOT.
16. IN THE CHAMPS ELYSEES, PARIS.
17. FLOWERS.
18. FLOWERS.
19. ST. ETIENNE DU MONT, PARIS.
20. ST. CLOUD.
21. THE LITTLE STREET AT LEVALLOIS.
22. THE LIFELESS TREES.
23. THE SUNLIT ROAD.
24. NOTRE-DAME OF PARIS, AUTUMN.
25. PLACE DE LA CONCORDE.
26. LA TRINITE, PARIS.
27. NOTRE-DAME OF PARIS, THE EMBANKMENT.
28. ALLEGHENY RIVER, PITTSBURG.

ETCHINGS AND DRYPOINTS

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29. THE OLD LADY'S GARDEN.
30. THE GRANDFATHER.
31. THE MORNING BATH.
32. BY THE WATER'S EDGE.
33. PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST.
34. THE SEINE AT ASNieres.
35. THE DOG WASHER.
36. A FRIENDLY DISCUSSION.
37. NO MAN'S LAND.
38. "YOUR HEALTH!"
39. MOVING-DAY.
40. ON THE ROAD.
41. CARNATIONS (FAN).

42. ACTRESS.
43. ACROSS THE FIELDS.
44. BOULEVARD DES FILLES DU CALVAIRE.
45. THE LETTER.
46. THE NAVVY.
47. MAN WITH A DOG (*Unique proof with
remarque*).
48. DRESSING.
49. HÔTEL DES INVALIDES.
50. ROAD WITH TREES.
51. AT HER TOILET.
52. A SUNDAY WALK.
53. TWO FRIENDS.
54. PLACE DE LA MADELEINE.
55. AT JEUNEVILLIERS.
56. THE LITTLE STREET.